

Orlando Response: #lovewins – Delaware Health and Social Services Community Resources

DOVER – The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) announced community resources today in response to the shootings at an Orlando gay club over the weekend. Adults and youth struggling with grief or wanting to learn more about local lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community resources, can call 2-1-1 in Delaware.

“Many of our hearts were broken yesterday as we woke up and learned about the Orlando shooting,” said DHSS Secretary Rita Landgraf. “Now is the time to wrap ourselves around our LGBT youth, and indeed the entire community, and say we stand with you as our brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, friends and co-workers.”

Despite recent gains, too many LGBT youth and adults still face discrimination and are more likely to be the victims of violence, particularly transgender individuals. They are also more likely to suffer trauma and depression and to have suicidal thoughts.

“Stress and trauma negatively impact mental and physical health,” said Dr. Karyl Rattay, DPH director. “As we all work together to reduce health disparities in our community, it is important to recognize the special stress and trauma when faced with discrimination and violence simply for trying to live your honest life. There are numerous resources in the community to find support and today we want to spread the word that help is out there.”

Added Lisa Goodman, President of Equality Delaware, Inc., “No one should get the message from this tragedy that they are alone. We all stand together and we all matter. If you are

struggling with grief or if you want to help, please reach out and take advantage of community resources available nationally and in Delaware.”

Important resources:

- The Trevor Project – 24/7 Suicide Hotline for youth struggling with suicide or just needing a safe space to talk: <http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>
- It Gets Better – an affirming place for youth struggling with harassment: <http://www.itgetsbetter.org/>
- Equality Delaware – local civil rights organization committed to fair treatment for all: <http://www.equalitydelaware.org/> or lisa@equalitydelaware.org
- Camp Rehoboth – full service community center with a multitude of activities, events and programs at: <http://www.camprehoboth.com/> or steve@camprehoboth.com. For counseling, including grief counseling, Salvatore Seeley at salvatoreseeley@aol.com
- Resources for educators and creating a safe space:
 - o Grades K – 5 <http://www.glsen.org/readysetrepect>
 - o Grades 6 – 12: <http://www.glsen.org/safespace>

A gunman opened fire at an Orlando gay club early Sunday morning killing at least 49 people and wounding at least 53.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware’s citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.